

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-60 are pending in the Application. By this amendment, claims 26, 38, 48 and 51 are being amended to improve their form. No new matter is involved.

In Paragraph 2 which begins on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-28, 36-50 and 58-60 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,609,424 of Sakuragi. In Paragraph 4 which begins on page 13 of the Office Action, claims 5, 12, 29-35 and 51-57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over XX (Applicant assumes this is Sakuragi '424) in view of King Jim Company Ltd. (King) EP0849687 A2. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

In rejecting claims based on Sakuragi, the Office Action refers to line 55 of column 13 through line 52 of column 14 of the reference. A detailed study of the passages set forth therein reveal the following:

(a) Lines 55-67 of column 13 contain an explanation about the text registration routine represented by the flow chart in Fig. 19.

(b) Lines 1-14 of column 14 include an explanation about the tape width change.

(c) Lines 15-23 of column 14 describe an example in which the tape width is changed to 12 mm. Display is made of the inputted text data such as title, and the like.

(d) Lines 24-34 of column 14 include an explanation about the layout change, such as setting the type of line print provided, the inter-character pitch, and the like.

(e) Lines 35-49 of column 14 include an explanation about the registration processes. As items to be registered, tape width, line layout data, and the like, are exemplified.

Consequently, Sakuragi contains no disclosure or suggestion, with respect to the layout change noted in item (d) above and elsewhere, regarding the features in accordance with the present invention as set forth in independent claims 1 and 8. Claim 1 defines an image printing method which includes "a regular printing instruction step of instructing regular printing for printing said regular character string, irrespective of whether or not a character string other than said regular character string is being input or edited". And in independent claim 8, an image printing apparatus is defined which includes "regular printing instruction means for instructing regular printing for printing said regular character string, irrespective of whether or not a character string other than said regular character string is being input or edited".

In item "(c) above which notes the example in Sakuragi in which the tape width is changed to 12 mm and display is made of the inputted text data such as title, and the like, and elsewhere in Sakuragi, there is no disclosure or suggestion of further novel features in accordance with the invention as set forth in independent claims 1 and 8. Thus, claim 1 defines the further feature in accordance with the image printing method thereof in terms of "a regular printing step of printing a regular character string image corresponding to said regular character string on a printing object as a print image when said regular printing is instructed". And in the case of claim 8, the image printing apparatus thereof is further defined as including "regular printing means for printing a regular character string image corresponding to said regular character string as a print image on a printing object when said regular printing is instructed".

From the very beginning of the disclosure contained in Sakuragi, such reference seems to have no idea at all of handling or treating the "regular character string" and "a character string other than the regular character string" separately

so that regular printing is instructed to print the regular character string irrespective of whether or not the character string other than the regular character string is being input or edited.

Thus, an important feature in accordance with the present invention is neither disclosed nor suggested by Sakuragi. Such feature is described at line 19 of page 4 through line 1 of page 5 of the specification, wherein it is stated in part:

“...it is possible to register beforehand a character string including one or more characters as a regular character string and instruct regular printing for printing the regular character string, irrespective of whether or not a character string other than the regular character string is being input or edited.” The feature includes that the above printing can be made “at a desired time point” (page 4, line 30).

In other words, the disclosure of Sakuragi could not enable one skilled in the art to attain the object in accordance with the present invention as described at page 3, lines 19-25 of the specification. More specifically, such object is one of providing an image printing method and apparatus which are capable of printing a regular character string image of registered regular character string at a desired time point through simple operations, irrespective of whether other character strings are being edited or not, while saving the capacity of a memory used for displaying images.

Consequently, independent claims 1 and 8 clearly distinguish patentably over Sakuragi. Dependent claims 2-4, 6, 7, 9-11, 13-28, 36-50 and 58-60 depend, directly or indirectly, from one of independent claims 1 and 8 and contain all of the limitations thereof. Therefore, such claims are also submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over Sakuragi.

Appl. No. 09/601,010
Amdt. Dated February 11, 2004
Reply to Office Action of December 4, 2003

Attorney Docket No. 81752.0090
Customer No.: 26021

Similarly, dependent claims 5, 12, 29-35 and 51-57 depend, directly or indirectly, from either of independent claims 1 and 8 and contain all of the limitations thereof, so that such claims also clearly distinguish patentably over the combination of Sakuragi and King. The attempted combination of such references does not overcome the failure of the attempted combination to disclose or suggest the advantageous features in accordance with the invention as set forth in independent claims 1 and 8. In this connection, it is apparent from the discussion in Paragraph 4 beginning on page 13 of the Office Action that the reference to "XX" refers to the Sakuragi reference.

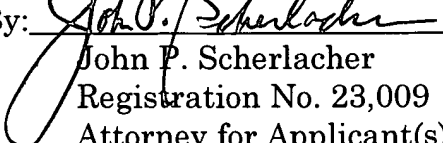
In conclusion, claims 1-60 are submitted to clearly distinguish patentably over the art for the reasons discussed above. Therefore, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, California telephone number (213) 337-6846 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

Date: February 11, 2004

By: 
John P. Scherlacher
Registration No. 23,009
Attorney for Applicant(s)

500 South Grand Avenue, Suite 1900
Los Angeles, California 90071
Phone: 213-337-6700
Fax: 213-337-6701